

Capture of a Tagged Ridley Turtle

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ON December 10, 1966, the shrimp boat *Miss Marathon* netted a ridley turtle (*Lepidochelys olivacea kempii*) between the Marquesas Keys and the Dry Tortugas. The turtle bore a small metal tag on the posterior edge of the left front flipper which read, "Premio por Devolución, Remitir: Dir. Gral. de Pesca, México, D. F." on one side and "A 1071" on the other side.

The turtle was brought to a Marathon fish house on December 12, 1966, and the Florida Board of Conservation was notified. All pertinent data were sent to the proper Mexican authorities and the turtle was put in the Key West Municipal Aquarium for further observation.

Dr. Archie Carr of the University of Florida was also notified, and he gave the following pertinent information. The turtle, a female, was released by Mexican fisheries officers on May 12, 1966, between Barra de las Calabazas and Cachimba, Tamaulipas (a spot about 90 miles north of Tampico), Mexico. Its carapace measured 65 cm when released.

The turtle was captured on December 10, 1966, after 212 days at liberty. During this time its carapace length had increased by 4 cm (69 cm at capture) and it had traversed approximately 955 miles, if travel was in a straight line.

The tagging and release of this turtle is but a small part of the current Mexican research on sea turtles. As part of the Programa Nacional de Mercado de Tortugas Marinas (Montoya, 1966) in Mexico, 285 ridley turtles were tagged and released during the months of April through July 1966 (Chavez, 1966). Recovery data on 10 of these 285 turtles were published in January of this year (Chavez, 1967). Four of these first 10 recoveries were made off the Mexican coast, two others were taken off the Texas coast, and four from Louisiana waters. To my knowledge, this capture represents the first of this group of tagged turtles taken in Florida waters.

LITERATURE CITED

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